



Bitterroot National Forest

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NEWS RELEASE

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“ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EAST FORK PROJECT PROGRESSES”

Hamilton, Montana, February 28, 2005— Forest Supervisor Dave Bull has decided to analyze a third alternative that was developed by members of the public for the Middle East Fork Project. This alternative provides a strong contrast in approach to the approach developed by the Forest Service through public meetings.

Under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, the public can submit an alternative for consideration during the scoping phase of a project. In the Middle East Fork Project, the Forest Service, working with the community and the drafters of the Bitterroot Community Wildfire Protection Plan, developed a proposed action through community collaboration and a no action alternative. Two additional alternatives were submitted by members of the public.

According to Bull, “When our specialists looked at the submitted alternatives, we realized one was very similar to the current proposed action developed over several months through public meetings. The third alternative was very different and our analysis of it will provide me with more information on which to base my decision”.

A complete analysis of the alternative will be provided in a draft environmental impact statement for the Middle East Fork project available in April. For more information, contact District Ranger Tracy Hollingshead at 406-821-2329, or 406-360-9055.

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